

SMARTER UPSTARTER

Q & A

Q: What is the TIA?

A: A law passed by the General Assembly that provides an opportunity to create a new 1 cent sales tax for transportation needs in the 12 regions of Georgia.

Q: Will I get to vote on this initiative?

A: Yes, the referenda are scheduled for July 31, 2012. If the referendum passes in the Metro Region, it will be for a ten year period.

Q: Where is Dacula in the Georgia regions?

A: Dacula is in the Metro Atlanta Region, the region covered by the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Q: What if the referendum fails in our region and passes in another region?

A: Our region would not impose the 1 cent sales tax and would need to find other ways of paying for needed improvements. The other region would participate.

Q: How much of the 15% money would Dacula receive?

A: Just about \$1.5 million over the life of the TIA.

Q: How does the City of Dacula currently pay for road and transportation improvements?

A: There are three methods, money from the general fund, money from regular SPLOST funding designated for transportation projects, or by assessment. The last one, assessment, is rarely used in Dacula because it is calculated by assessing a fee against the property owners who face the road.

Transportation Investment Act Information

The Transportation Investment Act provides for a one penny sales tax for transportation improvements over a ten year period. Counties in the twelve regions across Georgia will vote for the proposition during the July 31, 2012 referenda. The penny tax is designed to raise about \$7 billion statewide for transportation improvements from bike paths, sidewalks, bridges, whole new roads and alignments all the way to heavy transit projects. Each of the 12 regional votes stands on its own. Within a region some counties may vote the issue down, but enough people in other counties in the region may vote in numbers large enough to pass the referendum within the region.

All the tax money raised within a region will stay within the region. 85 per cent of the money raised in the region will go to funding projects on the TIA project list for that particular region. The remaining 15% will go directly to local governments in the region to fund transportation needs within each local government.

For Gwinnett County, the 22 projects on the list amount to about \$898 million in proposed improvements. In the Dacula area, 7 of those projects amount to more than \$484 million, and these improvements to transportation infrastructure will directly enhance your transportation needs.

There are several ways that transportation capital and maintenance costs are covered in Georgia. State roads are generally paid for from gasoline tax proceeds while local roads are paid from general tax funds or special local option sales taxes. Most municipalities also have an assessment method available to them, a method rarely used as it involves assessing the total cost to the property owners who have road frontage.

Most pundits agree that about 20-30 per cent of the money derived from the TIA sales tax would come from either out-of-regions or from out-of-state consumers.

Such sales would reduce the total burden of the TIA for taxpayers within a particular region and for the state as a whole.

Please educate yourself on the TIA and the July 31 referenda. It is your choice, and you will have the final say in this matter.